

July 31, 1989

SCAPICCHIO NAMED CHAIRMAN EMERITUS OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE Setnik Named Acting Chairman

Anthony P. Scapicchio, M.D., MAH chairman of emergency medicine for fifteen years and recently named Chairman Emeritus of Emergency Medicine, was honored at a reception held last week. Dr. Scapicchio was the hospital's first director of emergency services and was an early leader in developing the practice of emergency medicine as an independent specialty. He remains a practicing member of the MAH emergency medicine staff.

"Dr. Scapicchio was a visionary in recognizing that emergency medicine should be treated as a specialty," notes colleague Gary Setnik, M.D., who was recently named acting chairman of emergency medicine. Dr. Scapicchio joined the hospital at a time in which the practice and organization of emergency medicine was first being established on a national level. Prior to that time—and still, in some hospitals—the emergency room was generally operated as a branch of internal medicine. It was about ten years ago that Emergency Medicine was first recognized as a distinct medical specialty with its own board certification.

Building an Emergency Care Team

Under Dr. Scapicchio's leadership, MAH became the first teaching hospital in Massachusetts to establish a full-time attending staff dedicated to the emergency unit, which he considers one of his greatest accomplishments. "It was a well-functioning unit," he explains, "but the most stable element was the full-time nursing staff. The physician input varied from day to day." From a small group of rotating physicians, the department has grown to a staff of eight physicians specializing in emergency medicine, attending seven days a week, round the clock, supported by full-time nurses, houseofficers, and a full complement of caregivers.

His other goals were to set standards and policies for the emergency unit and organize support services. Long before it became a prominent issue, the MAH emergency unit also limited the number of hours that houseofficers would work and ensured 24-hour supervision by attending physicians. "What we did several years ago is just now becoming the legislative standard," Dr. Scapicchio comments. Dr. Scapicchio was also instrumental in establishing the Walk-In Center in his second year at MAH, to accommodate the increasing number of visits to the emergency unit by patients with non-urgent conditions.

Improving Pre-hospital Care

Quick and effective care of victims at the site of an accident or emergency is often a critical component of emergency medicine. Dr. Scapicchio was one of the first physicians in the community to promote the importance of pre-hospital emergency care in the ultimate well-being of patients. He has been a leader in developing the South Middlesex Emergency Medical Services Consortium, a

cooperative venture of local hospitals, municipalities, fire and police teams. "Fifteen years ago, pre-hospital care was given by members of local fire and rescue departments, who had minimal training," he explains. As chairman of the Emergency Services subcommittee of the South Middlesex Hospital Association in the late '70s, Dr. Scapicchio worked with local counterparts to establish disaster drills and training for rescue workers. When certification for rescue workers was introduced, many of the training courses for emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and paramedics were given by the MAH emergency medicine staff. "We were really at the forefront of this issue in the area and in Massachusetts," he comments.

In addition to coordinating the department's relationship to the rest of the hospital, he has been active in the training of MAH houseofficers during their rotations in the unit. Dr. Scapicchio also served as president of the medical staff in 1988 and participates in the Medical Staff Executive Committee, the Credentials, Quality Assurance, and Bylaws committees.

For his long and continuing commitment to developing the organization and practice of emergency medicine, and his leadership at MAH, Dr. Scapicchio was presented with a formal tribute by Chairman of the Board James Roosevelt, Jr., and with a gift by President Francis P. Lynch during the reception.

MAH TO FEATURE HIGH-TECH NURSERY FOR "AT RISK" BABIES

As part of the modernization of maternity facilities at MAH, the hospital will open a special nursery to care for infants with health complications. This "Level II" nursery will care for infants from other area hospitals not equipped to handle such sick babies, as well as babies born here who need special care, explains David Link, M.D., chief of the joint department of pediatrics at MAH and the Cambridge Hospital.

Following an agreement between MAH management and the Children's Service at the Massachusetts General Hospital, with the support of the Cambridge Hospital, MAH has begun planning the design, equipment, staffing and support services for the Level II nursery, which is scheduled to open in the fall of 1990. Medical staff will include neonatologists (specialists in care of newborns), in-house pediatricians, anesthesiologists and obstetricians. Special training will be provided for the nursing staff. The new nursery will be a valuable adjunct to the new maternity facilities being built under Operation 2000.

NEW NURSE MANAGER NAMED

Barbara Jo Shope, R.N. joined MAH as nurse manager of South-4 last week. Ms. Shope, a certified critical care nurse
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